DEC 2 0 2002

Dear Reviewer:

In accordance with provisions of the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA), National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA Fisheries) has filed a Final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) titled *Anadromous Fish Agreements and Habitat Conservation Plans for the Wells, Rocky Reach, and Rock Island Hydroelectric Projects* with the Environmental Protection Agency and has initiated the 30-day cooling off period during which we invite comments on or questions about the Final EIS. The Final EIS will be noticed in the Federal Register on December 27, 2002, and is available on our website at www.nwr.noaa.gov.

The Final EIS evaluates NOAA Fisheries' proposed issuance of Endangered Species Act (ESA) section 10(a)(1)(B) incidental take permits to Public Utility District (PUD) No. 1 of Douglas County (Wells application No. 1391) and PUD No. 1 of Chelan County (Rocky Reach and Rock Island applications Nos. 1392 and 1393). The proposed permits relate to incidental take of listed and unlisted species of salmon and steelhead resulting from the operation of three hydroelectric projects located on the Columbia River between river mile 453.4 and 515.8 near the city of Wenatchee, Washington. Each permit application includes a proposed Anadromous Fish Agreement and Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP). The Final EIS addresses comments received on the Draft EIS as well as the PUDs' revised permit applications and HCPs.

Please find enclosed a hard copy of the Final EIS for your review. Requests for additional copies or questions relating to the Final EIS should be directed to Ritchie Graves at 503-231-6891. Comments concerning the Final EIS should be submitted by January 27, 2003, to the following address:

National Marine Fisheries Service
Attention Ritchie Graves, Hydro Program
525 NE Oregon Street, Suite 500
Portland, OR 97232-2737

Sincerely,

James P. Burgess, III
NEPA Coordinator

Enclosure